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Excerpt from Oppenheim's INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. II, Sixth Edition, 1940

From pp. 174-75

¶ 61. Whatever may be the cause of a war that has broken out, and whether or no the cause be a so-called just cause, the same rules of International Law are valid as to what must not be done, may be done, and must be done by the belligerents themselves in making war against each other, and as between the belligerents and neutral States. This is so, even if the declaration of war is ipso facto a violation of International Law, as when a belligerent declares war upon a neutral State for refusing passage to its troops, or when a State goes to war in patent violation of its obligations under the Covenant of the League or of the General Treaty for the Renunciation of War. To say that, because such a declaration of war is ipso facto a violation of International Law, it is "inoperative in law and without any judicial significance," is erroneous. The rules of International Law apply to war from whatever cause it originates.